



BLUE EARTH COUNTY

COMMUNICATOR

Effectively & Efficiently Delivering Essential Services

SPRING & SUMMER 2011



Justice Center Awarded LEED Certification

The Blue Earth County Justice Center was recently awarded as the first public Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) facility in South-central Minnesota and the first LEED-certified jail in the State of Minnesota. LEED certification was established by the U.S. Green Building Council and verified by the Green Building Certification Institute and is the Nation's preeminent program for design, construction and operation of high performance green buildings. The Blue Earth County Board of Commissioners were formally presented a glass certification plaque for display in the building by Bryan Paulsen, President and Principal Architect of Paulsen Architects and Kevin Flynn with EcoDEEP at the March 15, 2011 board meeting. Paulsen Architects designed the facility and EcoDEEP was the LEED consultant for the project.

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POSTAL PATRON

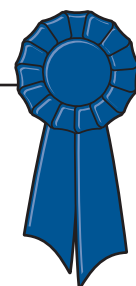
THE COMMUNICATOR

The Blue Earth County Communicator is published biannually to increase public awareness and involvement in county government.



For more information about the publication, or to submit questions and/or comments, contact:

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**Award-Winning
Publication**

by the National
Association of County
Information Officers

County Receives Motion Lighting Grant



WHAT'S NEW



Blue Earth County received a grant from the State of Minnesota to add motion lighting to a number of County facilities including the Historic Courthouse, Government Center and Library. The grant will cover 65 percent of the cost associated with the Government Center lighting and 50 percent of the lighting cost to the Courthouse and Library. The State code requirement in place since June 2009, now requires any commercial space that is remodeled to install motion-sensor lighting with some exceptions to the size of the facility.

The lighting project will help reduce the energy consumption and operating costs for these buildings which will help save taxpayer dollars for years to come. It is anticipated that the payback in energy savings for the cost of the project will have less than a 1 year payback. A B3 benchmarking program will be used to verify the savings over the next several years.

For more information, contact Tim Edwards, Physical Plant Director at (507) 304-4249.

Aging to the Max in the Greater Mankato Area

By Pam Determan, VINE Executive Director

VINE Faith in Action is actively raising funds to obtain and re-purpose the 60,000 square-foot Nichols Building located in the central core of Mankato to serve as the new and expanded headquarters of the organization and the Summit Center. Blue Earth County has agreed to sell the Nichols Building to VINE for \$1.00, providing it can generate the resources needed to renovate the former MSU Lower Campus building. Funds to rehabilitate the building envelope, estimated at \$1.7 million, are needed by this fall. Total project cost, including floor build-outs, is \$4.3 million.

VINE plans to create a “one-stop shop” for aging adults where they can improve their physical health, socialize with peers, volunteer their time helping others and access needed services. This much-needed new community resource will include a state-of-the-art adult center, a café, community meeting rooms, a fitness center with a warm water exercise pool, an adult respite center, a large chore garage and consolidated office space for VINE’s administrative and program staff and volunteers.

VINE is committed to helping older adults remain healthy and living in their own



homes for as long as it is safe and reasonable to do so. This past year, 566 trained adult volunteers assisted over 3,500 community members with transportation, home chores, respite care, friendly visits and a multitude of other tasks that helped neighbors through the challenges of life. Since VINE assumed management of the Summit Center in 2006, weekly participation has grown from 50 to 485 people per week. The organization is rich in human resources; however, additional space for programming and parking is critical for continued growth.

The community’s help is needed to bring this vision to life. Contact Pam Determan, VINE Executive Director, at (507) 387-1666 or pamdeterman@vinevolunteers.com for more information.

Coming soon: www.agingtothemax.com ■

In 2011, the large baby boom generation begins to turn 65 and, for the next 50 years, the aging of our society will dominate the demographic landscape. By 2030, 25% of Minnesota’s population will be age 65+. Visit www.dhs.state.mn.us/2010 to learn more.

First Half Real Estate Taxes Due May 16

The Blue Earth County Taxpayer Services Department reminds property owners that the first half of their 2011 property taxes are due on Monday, May 16, 2011. The Taxpayer Services office is located on the first floor of the Historic Courthouse, 204 S. Fifth Street, in Mankato. Payments postmarked on or before that date will be accepted without penalty.



Pictured above is a rendering of the proposed changes to the Nichols Building located at 410 Jackson Street in Mankato. VINE plans to raise money to rehabilitate the facility to create a community resource and “one-stop shop” for aging adults to remain healthy and independent.

For more information contact Pam Determan, VINE Executive Director, at (507) 387-1666 or pamdeterman@vinevolunteers.com.

Applications Being Accepted for Breckenridge Townhomes

By Patti Ziegler, Housing Programs Coordinator



A computerized rendering provided by Paulsen Architects illustrates what the Breckenridge Townhomes Project will look like upon completion in summer 2011.

Applications are now being accepted for Breckenridge Townhomes, an affordable housing option for qualified applicants.

This townhome community, located in Eagle Lake, Minnesota includes 18 units: nine public housing units rented at 30 percent of families' adjusted gross income and nine affordable market rate units. One building is fully handicapped accessible, and another can be converted to full accessibility should the need arise. The back of each townhome faces a courtyard, which includes a playground and gazebo, making it an ideal location for families. Breckenridge Townhomes is owned by the Blue Earth County Economic Development Authority.

Amenities

- Attached garages
- Central air
- Washers and dryers
- Courtyard with a gazebo

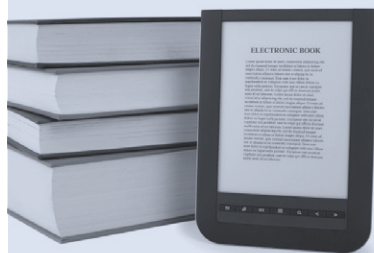
- Energy-efficient appliances
- Green Communities rating
- Playground
- Smoke free
- Two bedroom or three bedroom units

How to apply

For more information or to apply for this housing opportunity, contact housing staff at (507) 387-8636 or cdhse@city.mankato.mn.us to make an appointment.

To qualify for the Affordable Housing Program, applicants must meet income guidelines, have a background check and provide rental references. Breckenridge Townhomes are funded by the Blue Earth County Economic Development Authority, the Greater Minnesota Housing Fund, the Southwest Minnesota Housing Partnership, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency. ■

eBooks at BEC Library



Anticipating a May implementation, the Blue Earth County Library System will have eBooks available for patrons. Thanks to a Schmidt Foundation grant to the Traverse des Sioux Library System, Blue Earth County Library patrons will be able to download digital books onto their personal digital devices. Patrons can browse the collection on their home computer and download their selection onto their Nook, Sony Reader or similar device 24/7. The eBooks are not compatible with Kindle readers.

Both the e-books and audio books collection will provide an added service to Blue Earth County Library patrons along with regular print material and the audio/visual collection. The e-books grant will cover expenses associated with the collection for one year, at which time, cost and usage will be evaluated.

Families are Invited to Attend a Spring Car Seat Safety Clinic at Snell Motors

Saturday, April 30, 2011
9 a.m. to Noon
Snell Motors
1900 Madison Ave., Mankato

Families will have the opportunity to take part in a number of educational activities, register for door prizes, enjoy refreshments & snacks and visit with professionals about car seat safety education.

Family Activities:

- Car Seat Safety Checks
- Rollover Simulator
- Great Door Prizes
- Children's Play Area with the YMCA
- Safety Vehicle displays
- Free giveaways
- Appearances by McGruff the Crime Dog, Sparky the Firedog and Crash Dummies!

**To guarantee a car seat safety check appointment, please contact Michelle at Blue Earth County Human Services at 507.304.4273 to register. The event will take place in the Snell Motors parking lot and will move inside upon inclement weather.*

**LJP Waste & Recycle will be providing a drop off to dispose of unusable car seats.*

Help Feed Blue Earth County



Take part in the Letter Carriers' Food Drive throughout Blue Earth County Saturday, May 14

Help stamp out hunger by putting non-perishable food donations in a bag by your mailbox or leave it at your local post office. Letter carriers will deliver it to a local food bank.

For more information contact your local post office.

Drug Court Visits the Capitol



PUBLIC WORKS

The Blue Earth County Drug Court Program, along with all Drug Courts from around the State visited the Minnesota State Capitol on Thursday, March 24 for a rally. The rally took place in the Capitol rotunda and featured speakers including; the honorable Robert Rancourt, former Congressman James Ramstad, Senator Julie Rosen and Drug Court graduates. Following the rally, Blue Earth County Drug Court participants and staff met with Senator Kathy Sheran, Representative Kathy Brynaert and Representative Tony Cornish.



Members of Drug Court, Leah Walters and Stephanie Spencer, meeting with representative Kathy Brynaert.

Red Jacket Trestle Pier Collapse Update

By Alan Forsberg, County Engineer and Public Works Director



The southern pier of the Red Jacket Trail trestle was badly damaged by the September 2010 flood and was in danger of collapsing. After analysis using special laser equipment, it was determined that the pier was damaged beyond repair and plans were put in place to dismantle the bridge and take it off site for safe keeping until work could be done to fix the pier. As the southern span was lifted, the southern pier collapsed. In late 2010, the span was salvaged, pier debris was removed and a dangerous bridge collapse was avoided. Throughout winter a large debris pile

in front of the center pier of the Red Jacket Trail trestle was removed and a substantial scour hole was stabilized with rock fill by County Public Works staff. Throughout the 2011 construction season a new southern pier will be constructed which will closely resemble the original pier and the original steel span bridge will be replaced. Blue Earth County obtained funds from FEMA Emergency Disaster Assistance for the cost of the project. The Red Jacket Trail trestle is planned to open in fall 2011 and remain a valued historic and recreational resource for the area.

Mark Severe Weather Awareness Week April 11-15

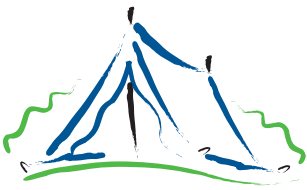
Tornado Drills on Thursday, April 14

Afternoon Tornado Drill – 1:45 p.m.
The outdoor warning sirens will be sounded. Schools, businesses and other facilities are encouraged to conduct a tornado drill at this time to practice their tornado sheltering plans.

Evening Tornado Drill – 6:55 p.m.
The sirens will also sound for this evening drill. This is important because severe weather including tornadoes occurs most often between 3 and 8 pm. The evening drill gives second-shift workers and families an opportunity to practice their sheltering plans.

For more information contact Blue Earth County Emergency Management at (507) 304-4606.

Summer Activities At Blue Earth County Parks!

PARKS	ACTIVITIES																			
	Tent Camping Sites	Mobile Camping Sites	Electrical Hook-ups	Bathhouse	Boat/Canoe Launch	Canoe Rental	Drinking Water	Dump Station	Fire Rings/Grills	Fishing	Fishing Dock	Horseshoe Pits	Interpretive Center/Log Cabin	Nature Trail	Paddleboat Rental	Picnic Shelters	Picnic Tables	Playground	Primitive Restrooms	Resident Caretakers
BRAY (102.3 ACRES)	10	33	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
DALY (92.41 ACRES)	15	71	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
DUCK LAKE (31.66 ACRES)				•	•	•	•		•	•	•				•	•	•	•	•	•
LAKE GEORGE (4.2 ACRES)					•				•	•	•					•	•	•		•
RAPIDAN (38.69 ACRES)	20				•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
RED JACKET TRAIL PARK (4 ACRES)					•		•		•	•			•		•	•				
WILLIAMS NATURE CENTER (65 ACRES)							•						•	•						•
INDIAN LAKE (120 ACRES)														•						
SCHIMEK (30 ACRES)									•	•				•		•	•			
WILDWOOD (28 ACRES)										•										
EAGLE LAKE (1 ACRE)					•					•									•	
LONE PINE (1.4 ACRES)					•					•										
HUNGRY HOLLOW STOP (4.2 ACRES)					•				•							•				
WATONWAN STOP (7 ACRES)					•				•	•					•	•				

CAMPING RESERVATIONS: Camping reservation systems are available at Bray and Daly Parks. Reservations are taken by phone, online or in person at the park for which the reservation is requested. Park personnel will take reservations from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. A deposit is required to hold each camping site.

Daly Park:
11056 571st Lane
Mapleton, MN 56065
507-524-3000

Bray Park:
2214 Oriole Rd.
Madison Lake, MN 56063
507-243-3885

2011 Construction Projects

By Alan Forsberg, County Engineer and Public Works Director

With over 720 miles of highway and 125 bridges, the County needs a program of bridge replacement, road safety improvements and pavement rehabilitation to maintain the personal and freight mobility our citizens depend on. Projects in process for 2011 construction season include:

CSAH 26 Project at Eagle Lake

County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 26 from CSAH 12 to Madison Lake was reconstructed except for a segment on the north shore of Eagle Lake. Blue Earth County developed a safe, cost effective design that addressed environmental aspects, but was not able to obtain a MnDNR permit. The County is proceeding with an alternative safe design which will have more social impacts including a higher cost. Soil stabilization work will take place in 2011 with pavement work in 2012.

CSAH 10 at Beauford to Good Thunder

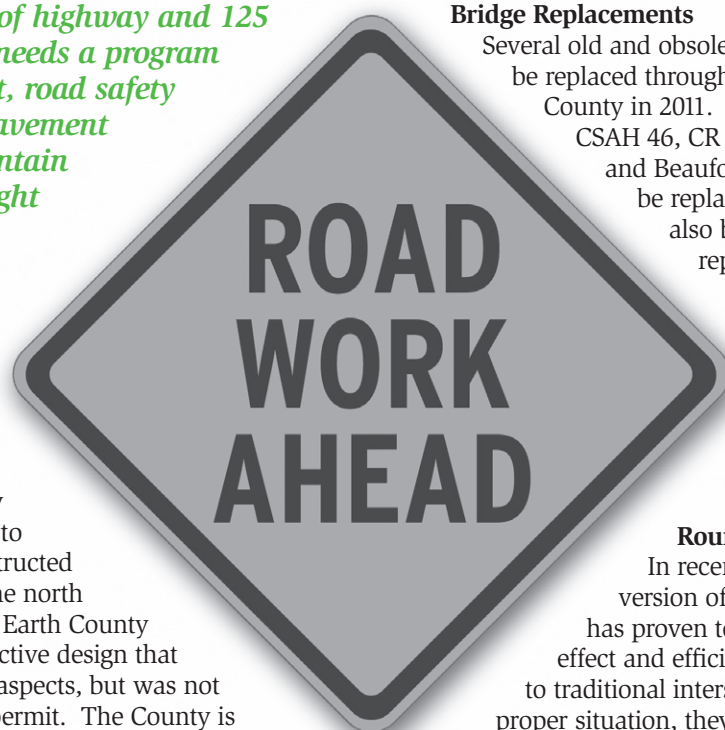
Safety improvements and pavement rehabilitation work is scheduled for CSAH 10 between Beauford and Good Thunder for 2011. The final pavement work will be completed in 2012. A corner and sharp curve will be addressed by creating two longer curves which will meet modern design safety standards. Old pavement from the project will be recycled and new bituminous surface will be placed.

Bridge Replacements

Several old and obsolete bridges will be replaced throughout Blue Earth County in 2011. Bridges on CSAH 46, CR 152, CR 164 and Beauford TR 337 will be replaced. Plans are also being prepared to replace two bridges with a single bridge and channel relocation on CSAH 14 south of TH 30.

Roundabouts

In recent years, a modern version of the roundabout has proven to be a cost effect and efficient alternative to traditional intersections. In the proper situation, they can improve safety, reduce crashes and crash severity and improve traffic flow. After considerable research, the County is preparing plans to construct roundabouts for the ramps coming off the future CSAH 12 Extension/TH 14 interchange. The Stadium Road and Victory Drive intersection east of the Minnesota State University, Mankato campus is also being considered as a future modern roundabout site. The County, MnDOT and the City of Mankato are also evaluating both the TH 22 and Madison Avenue and TH 22 and CSAH 90 intersections for future roundabouts. Please stay tuned for more information on upcoming road plans. ■



CSAH 12 Extension/TH 14 Interchange Project Update & Timeline

2011

- Roadway from CSAH 26 south to CSAH 3 will be paved and opened to traffic. The Sakatah Trail will pass over DM&E Railroad on the new bridge.
- Fill will be placed for planned roundabouts and TH 14 bridge approaches. Due to soft soils, early placement will allow the fill and underlying soils to consolidate.

2012

- Bridge over TH 14 constructed, road from CSAH 3 to CSAH 17 (Madison Ave) and ramps for interchange paved. Project completed and opened to traffic in the fall.

The CSAH 12 Extension/HWY 14 Interchange project is a result of the Mankato Area Transportation & Planning Study (MATAPS) regional transportation plan and is a partnership with MnDOT, City of Mankato and Blue Earth County.

Project goals include reducing traffic congestion on TH 22 at TH 14 and on Adams and Madison Avenue, Improving safety at CSAH 86 and TH 14 with an interchange and providing a safe crossing over the DM & E Railroad for the Sakatah Trail.

The project also works to encourage planned economic development, system continuity and improved connectivity within the transportation system.

For more information please contact the Blue Earth County Highway Department at (507) 304-4025.

Online Camping Reservation System

The Blue Earth County's Public Works Department recently introduced an online camping reservation system. RtVision is the web program vendor Blue Earth County contracted with. Testing, training and set-up continued through the winter months up to March 1, 2011, the first day the Parks Department accepted 2011 camping reservations for Bray and Daly Park. Nearly 1,000 reservations have been accepted online utilizing the new software. It is anticipated that the popularity of the system will continue to grow as users become accustomed to the new program.

The reservation system can be accessed through the Blue Earth County website at www.co.blue-earth.mn.us, by clicking on the online camping reservation link or navigating to the Parks Department page. Credit cards will soon be accepted as a form of payment along with checks or cash.



Sheriff's Office Receives Traffic Safety Grant



PUBLIC SAFETY

Successful traffic safety activities conducted by the Blue Earth County Sheriff's Office warranted a federal grant of \$1000 from the Department of Public Safety (DPS) Office of Traffic Safety. The agency was recognized at the Towards Zero Deaths Challenge luncheon on March 10, in Oakdale.

The Blue Earth County Sheriff's Office demonstrated extraordinary commitment and achievement in reducing traffic-related deaths and injuries in its jurisdiction in 2010. The award was presented to Deputy Tom Coulter and Captain Rich Murry by Commissioner Ramona Dohmand, Colonel Mark Dunanski of the Minnesota State Patrol and Office of Traffic Safety Director Cheri Marti. The Sheriff's Office plans to use the grant to purchase squad car equipment.

"To make our community and our roads safer, traffic enforcement and education is a necessary duty that we see as a priority," says Deputy Tom Coulter. "It's an honor to be recognized for our traffic safety activities and we'll continue our efforts to ensure safe roads in Blue Earth County."

The awards are based on the merits of the activities that law enforcement agencies conducted in 2010, including traffic safety community programs, enforcement, officer training, public and media relations, and presentations. Deputies spoke at area driving schools, businesses, safety camps and other public events about traffic safety laws. Deputy Coulter also spoke at multiple MADD Victim Impact Panels, which individuals convicted of a DWI charge are required to attend. Blue Earth County motorists are safer thanks to the work of these deputies who encourage safe driving behavior.

The Blue Earth County Sheriff's Office was one of 21 winning agencies from across the state. A total of \$45,000 in grants was awarded.



Cheri Marti, MN OTS; Brad Kollmann, MN OTS; Colonel Mark Dunanski, MN State Patrol; BEC Deputy Tom Coulter; BEC Captain Rich Murry; Kim Madsen, BEC SO; and Commissioner Ramona Dohmand, MN DPS

Severe Weather Safety Away From Home

By Brenda Olmscheid, Assistant Emergency Management Director



A detailed home tornado safety plan won't help you much if you're away from home when a tornado threatens. It is important to think about what you will do if a tornado threatens you while you're away from home - at work, church, school, while shopping, dining out, on vacation or participating in outdoor activities. The danger is higher when you're away from home, when you may be unfamiliar with the area and away from your usual sources of weather information. It is important for business owners, and those responsible for safety in all types of public buildings and venues, to think about and plan for tornado safety for all employees, occupants and potential visitors.

TYPE OF NOTICE	WHAT IT MEANS	YOU SHOULD...
Hazardous Weather Outlook	Will there be severe thunderstorms or tornadoes today or tonight, or several days from now?	If severe weather is expected, check back for later forecasts, information and possible watches.
Tornado or Severe Thunderstorm Watch	There's a good chance of large hail, damaging winds, and maybe even a tornado in the watch area within the next few hours.	If the watch includes your county, or one close to you, you should really start to pay attention to what's going on. If there are storms nearby, check your weather source to see if there are warnings.
Severe Thunderstorm Warning	A storm with large damaging hail and/or damaging winds has been seen, or indicated on radar.	Listen closely to the warning - it will tell you what exactly to expect (hail size and wind speed).
Tornado Warning	A tornado has either been seen, or there are signs on radar that a tornado could be forming.	If you're in the warning area, NOW is the time to put your safety plan into action.

Hotels and Motels

Think about tornado safety in hotels and motels. Some lodging establishments have safety plans for guests. Some establishments suggest guests seek shelter in hallways. However, people should remember to avoid open hallways - hallways that have doors and/or windows on either end. These can become wind tunnels and send debris flying down the corridor. Interior bathrooms and closets near the center of the building may be good shelters in this situation. Again, wherever you are forced to seek shelter in a tornado, cover up with pillows, heavy blankets or whatever you can find.

Outdoor Activities - Campgrounds, RV Parks, Sporting Events, Fairs, Festivals

Being exposed outdoors is one of the worst places to be in a tornado or severe thunderstorm. Being involved in outdoor activities can sometimes put you at increased risk, because you're exposed outdoors and possibly in an unfamiliar area. Organized outdoor events, including sporting events at all times of the year, should have weather safety plans. People at large sporting events are especially vulnerable because of the difficulties involved in moving large numbers of people. Event coordinators or managers should have a detailed severe weather safety plan in place and practice it. People at large outdoor gatherings or events should listen when severe weather information is conveyed and follow instructions if a safety plan is put into action.

Public Buildings - Malls, Stores, Restaurants, Hospitals

The same basic tornado safety guidelines apply in any public building, whether it's your local shopping mall, a hospital or nursing home, a grocery or discount store, a church, a hotel, convenience store, truck stop or restaurant. Remember!

GET IN: put as many walls between you and the outside as possible

GET DOWN: if you can't get underground, get as low as possible

COVER UP: use whatever you have to protect your head and body from flying objects

If a tornado threatens, you should not leave in your car! Being in a sturdy building is most likely safer than being in your vehicle on the road if a tornado hits. Stay calm and try to find a safe shelter wherever you are. ■

For more information, please contact Blue Earth County Emergency Management at 304-4806.

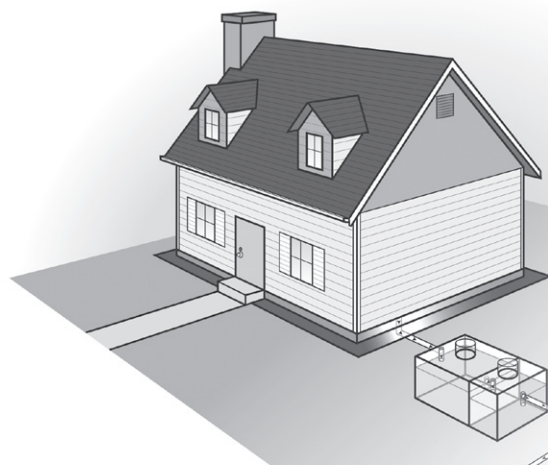
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES



Changes at the HHW
Facility and Product
Reuse Center

House for Sale? – Septic System Disclosure/Compliance Inspection Requirement

By Pete Otterness, Environmental Health Specialist



*Are you selling your house?
Are you looking to buy a house?
Have you purchased a house and were
contacted later that you needed a
new septic system? What should you
know at the time of sale?*

Minnesota Statutes require that in the sale or transfer of property the seller must disclose in writing to the buyer the location and status of the septic system or if the property is connected to a municipal sewer.

The Blue Earth County Code of Ordinances further requires that a compliance inspection be completed prior to the time of sale or transfer if not connected to municipal sewer. This requirement has been in place since 1998. The compliance inspection must be completed by a State licensed septic inspector or be covered by a current certificate of compliance from the County. This is to insure that the buyer knows the status and future requirements for upgrading the septic system as part of the process of the sale.

Minnesota Statutes give the buyer the right to seek action within two (2) years of the date on which the buyer or transferee closed the purchase of the property where the septic system is located. There are very specific legal rights and responsibilities listed in statutes stating if the compliance inspection or disclosure is not done properly the seller and/or the seller's agent may be responsible for the entire upgrade of the septic system

The County has created a disclosure form to aid a seller or a seller's agent in fulfilling the requirements of the State Statute and the County Ordinance. This form is available from the Environmental Services Department or on the Blue Earth County Website, <http://www.co.blue-earth.mn.us>. ■

For more information on the septic system requirements, please contact Blue Earth County Environmental Services at (507) 304-4381.

Look for some more changes at the Household Hazardous Waste Facility and Product Reuse Center this season.

Last summer, people heading to the Reuse Center entered through a side door, rather than the door at the front of the building. The change was for safety and to keep pedestrians away from cars entering to drop off materials.

This year, a change in traffic pattern is coming for those who want to drop off household hazardous waste.

Traffic will be re-routed so that cars can drive in, drop off and drive straight out a new exit rather than loop back around.

Be sure to watch for signage!

For more information please contact Blue Earth County Environmental Services at 304-4381.



**BLUE EARTH COUNTY
HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS
WASTE FACILITY AND
PRODUCT REUSE CENTER**
651 Summit Avenue, Mankato

Will accept Household Hazardous Waste from Residents of
Blue Earth, Nicollet, Le Sueur, and Sibley Counties Only

2011 Well Sealing Cost-Share Program



Minnesota Statutes require all wells that are not in use to be properly sealed by a licensed well contractor. Unused or improperly sealed wells can pose a significant threat to public health and the environment. They can provide a direct pathway for surface or near surface contamination to reach the groundwater. Sealing an unused or improperly sealed well protects the groundwater or other nearby wells from contamination.

This year marks the 21st consecutive year Blue Earth County Environmental Services will be administering a well sealing cost-share program. This program is aimed at assisting property owners with the costs to have old, unused wells properly sealed by a licensed well contractor. This program has successfully assisted in the proper sealing of 941 wells in Blue Earth County. All private, unsealed wells which have been replaced prior to 1989 are eligible for this program.

For more information about this program or to receive a 2011 well sealing cost-share application, please contact Blue Earth County Environmental Services at 304-4381.

2011 HOURS April-October

TUESDAYS
Noon to 6:00 PM
2ND SAT. of each Month
8 AM to 12:30 PM

MAY						
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Blue Earth County Environmental Services
24-hour Hotline 507-304-4242
www.co.blue-earth.mn.us





The Blue Earth County Library in Mankato is excited to announce the start of an Adult Book Discussion Club. Interested book lovers will meet on the third Tuesday evening of each month at 6:30 p.m. and the third Wednesday morning at 10 a.m. Books will be provided as well as refreshments. In April we'll be discussing "Snow Flower and the Secret Fan" by Lisa See. Sign up at the Lovelace Desk or by contacting Gena at (507) 304-4021.

Summer Reading 2011

By Tim Hayes, Library Director

**One World,
Many Stories**



Summer Reading 2011, "One World, Many Stories," kicks off on Monday, June 13, 2011. Thanks to the generosity of our key sponsors, Taylor Corporation and Friends of the Deep Valley Libraries, our program again has two components. First, reading incentive prizes are offered for children ages 0 to 17 to maintain and improve reading levels. Second, children may attend fun events in our auditorium twice weekly, and we have

six brand-new performers scheduled this year: Mad Science, BOOKcrobatics, Pint Size Polkas, Spoon Man, Professor Marvel's World of Wonder, Alf's World of Robotic Puppets and Z Puppets Rosenschnoz. Favorites from past summers are returning with new programs, such as Bruce the Bug Guy, Peter Bloedel, Mankato MoonDogs, The Minnesota Zoomobile, Jason the Juggler and much more. The Blue Earth County Summer Reading Program is offered at all library locations in Lake Crystal, Mankato and Mapleton. ■

**Sign-up begins June 13
Programs begin June 21**

BRAND-NEW PROGRAMS

Mad Science
BOOKcrobatics
Pint Size Polkas
Alf's World of Robotic Puppets
Spoon Man
Professor Marvel's World of Wonder
Z Puppets Rosenschnoz

OTHERS BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND

Minnesota Zoomobile
Peter Bloedel
Bruce the Bug Guy
Jason the Juggler
Mankato MoonDogs
and much, much more!!

**Don't miss programs and prizes
this summer at the
Blue Earth County Library!**

Celebrate Earth Day at the Library!

**Saturday, April 16
10 a.m. – Noon
Blue Earth County Library
Lovelace Children's Wing**

**Fun for Kids and Families
Activities • Games • Craft Projects**



To learn more about the 2011 Summer Reading Program contact (507) 304-4020 or visit www.beclibrary.org

Local Bookmark Contest Winners Announced

Students from Blue Earth and Nicollet Counties showcased their artistic talent by providing more than 1,500 entries for the Blue Earth County Library 2011 Bookmark Contest. Area students, ages preschool through 12th grade, entered the contest sponsored by Paragon Printing. An award ceremony recognized winners on Saturday, April 2 at the library. First-place designs were professionally printed and distributed at all Blue Earth County libraries.

Pre-kindergarten to Kindergarten Category:

First Place: Samuel Shabrack (K) Franklin
Second Place: Braden Barger (K) Kennedy
Third Place: Gabe Kietzer (K) LCWM
Third Place: Ariana Ruiz (Pre K) 5C's

First to Second Grade Category:

First Place: Amelia Lawver (2nd) LCWM
First Place: Arianna Tallman (2nd) Franklin
Second Place: Rylee Woller (1st) Mount Olive
Second Place: Megan Hiniker (2nd) Jefferson

Third Place: Sara Schiller (2nd) Eagle Lake
Third Place: Duram Kelly (1st) Loyola

Third to Fifth Grade Category:

First Place: Paige Malwitz (5th) Grace Christian
First Place: Jasmin Choi (5th) Mount Olive
Second Place: Anna Pepper (3rd) Classical Christian
Second Place: Olivia Starkey (3rd) Kennedy
Second Place: Antonio Berrones (5th) Monroe
Third Place: Josie Goellner (5th) Jefferson
Third Place: Nikolai Becker (4th) Immanuel Lutheran
Third Place: Lynae Casto (4th) Immanuel Lutheran

Sixth to Eighth Grade Category:

First Place: Emma Bloedel (7th) Mount Olive
First Place: Zander Boettcher (7th) Dakota Meadows
Second Place: Taylor Smith (7th) East Junior High
Second Place: James Strom (7th) Home School
Third Place: Mac Slocum (7th) East Junior High
Third Place: Kristina Johns (7) Dakota Meadows

Ninth to Twelfth Grade Category:

First Place: Nhi Nguyen (10th) East Senior High
First Place: Micaela Meisner (9th) West Senior High
First Place: Kelsey Kennedy (11th) West Senior High
Second Place: Courtney Spear (10th) Maple River High
Second Place: Ciara Sandborg (12th) Maple River High
Third Place: Andrew Murray (9th) Loyola
Third Place: Elizabeth Harris (11) West Senior High

Bookmark
Designed by
Nhi Nguyen



Blue Earth County Library System 2010 Donations

MONETARY

Blue Earth County Library System—General Fund

- American Library Association
- Buster’s Sports Bar & Grill
- Circulation Patrons
- Crystal Valley Cooperative
- ETA International
- Foster Family Foundation
- Simple Read

SPECIAL DESIGNATION MATERIALS

Blue Earth County Library, Mankato

- Carol Hannick Memorial
- Cecelia Haefner Memorial
- Helen Griffith Memorial
- Key City Conservation Club
- Mike & Susie Larsen
- Robbie Madison Memorial
- Rotary Club of Mankato
- Sandra Woodford Memorial
- Sue Dannatt Memorial
- Thomas & Sandra Kwolek
- Thursday Reading Club
- Water Fountain Coins

Lake Crystal Public Library, Lake Crystal

- Crystal Study Club
- Daughters of the American Revolution

Mapleton Public Library, Mapleton

- City of Mapleton
- Corinne J. Dittrich Memorial
- Harold Jones Memorial
- Woman’s Study Club

EVENTS

Blue Earth County Library, Mankato

- Friends of the Deep Valley Libraries

Mapleton Public Library, Mapleton

- Brat Stand Fundraiser

SUMMER READING PROGRAM

Blue Earth County Library, Mankato

- Friends of the Deep Valley Libraries
- Taylor Corporation
- Traverse des Sioux Library System

Lake Crystal Public Library, Lake Crystal

- Friends of the Deep Valley Libraries
- Taylor Corporation
- Traverse des Sioux Library System

Mapleton Public Library, Mapleton

- Friends of the Deep Valley Libraries
- Heather Curling Club
- Mapleton Area Chamber
- Taylor Corporation
- Traverse des Sioux Library System

VOLUNTEERS

Blue Earth County Library, Mankato

- 4H
- Abdifatha Aden
- Amy Metcalf
- Anthony Rezac
- Ardie Josephson
- Ashley Alexander
- Bethany Performers
- Blue Earth County Environmental Services
- Blue Earth County Extension
- Blue Earth County Historical Society
- Blue Earth County Human Services
- Blue Earth County Sheriff
- Brenda Pfarr
- Elexis Emery
- Emily Dittrich
- Erika Holm
- Friends of the Deep Valley Libraries
- ISD 77 Community Based Work Program
- Janinya Berglin
- Key City Kennel Club
- KEYC TV
- Mankato Diversity Council
- Mankato Moondogs
- Marge Fitterer
- Merely Players
- Children’s Museum of Southern Minnesota
- MSU Educational Studies
- Nancy Faber
- National Honor Society
- Old Navy
- Pamela Leinberger
- Playwright’s Theatre
- Rafael Brito
- Rotary Club of Mankato
- Therapy Dogs
- TJ & Lisa—New Country Minnesota 93
- Twin Rivers Council for the Arts
- Xia Nelson

Mapleton Public Library, Mapleton

- Cindy Merritt
- Lee Solie
- Lola Johnston
- Mapleton Chamber of Commerce
- Rice Gay
- Rita Caron
- Sue Morrow

2010 LIBRARY BOARD

- Commissioner Will Purvis
- Stephanie Miller
- Linda Stowell
- Bryan Stempka
- Carol Jones

IN-KIND

SPECIAL DESIGNATION MATERIALS

Blue Earth County Library, Mankato

- ABDO Publishing
- Amy Heiser
- Appletree Press, Inc
- Barb Maher
- BBC Audio Books
- Betty Cords
- Betty Meyer
- Charles Sehe
- Community Bank
- Craig Nett
- Darryl Nelson
- Daughters of the American Revolution
- David & Doris Boyce
- Immanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church
- Lake Crystal Tribune
- Linda Hachfeld
- Mankato West High School
- Nancy Burger
- Patricia Juergen
- Portfolio Club
- Refurbish Pet & Pedigree Grooming
- Roy Ganey
- Tom McLaughlin

Lake Crystal Public Library, Lake Crystal

- Appletree Press, Inc.
- Jon Moses
- Terry & Vicky Chesney

Mapleton Public Library, Mapleton

- Appletree Press, Inc.

PROMOTIONS

Blue Earth County Library System

- KEYC TV—Read More About It
- New Country Minnesota 93—Radio Spots
- Paragon Printing

SUMMER READING PROGRAM

Blue Earth County Library, Mankato

Lake Crystal Public Library, Lake Crystal

Mapleton Public Library, Mapleton

- Chipotle Mexican Grill
- Karmel Korn / Orange Julius
- Mankato Experimental Aircraft
- Mankato Moondogs
- Noodles & Company
- Old Country Buffet
- Papa Murphy’s
- Pizza Ranch
- TY
- WOW Zone



Thank you to all the generous sponsors in 2010 for the libraries in Mankato, Lake Crystal and Mapleton communities.

More People Eligible for Medical Assistance



HUMAN SERVICES

As of March 1, additional low income individuals became eligible for Medicaid benefits under expansion of Minnesota's Medical Assistance (MA) program. Adults age 21 through 64 years of age may qualify if they do not have children under age 21 in the home, and they meet the income limits of:

- \$677 a month or \$8,124 a year for one person
- \$911 a month or \$10,932 a year for a married couple.

People may apply by completing a Minnesota Health Care Application, which is available by contacting the local Human Services Office at 410 S. 5th Street in Mankato. Call (507) 304-4222 for more information.

MinnesotaCare and GAMC enrollees who meet these new MA rules will not have to take any action and can continue to go to their health care providers for services. They will automatically be enrolled and have MA benefits as of March 1.

Running Short on Money for Groceries?

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, formally known as Food Stamps, has new guidelines that help more people qualify for the program. This is a federally funded program that helps provide food to ensure people receive the nutrition they need to be healthy. By using these federal benefits, it also helps stimulate our local economy.

Effective 11/1/2010, the gross income limits increased and all assets are excluded for categorically eligible households.

# of People	Gross Income
1	\$1490
2	\$2004
3	\$2518
4	\$3032
5	\$3547



To apply for this program, contact the Blue Earth County Human Services Department located at 410 S. 5th Street in Mankato or call (507) 304-4222 for more information.

Mental Health Center Provides Essential Services

By Angela Youngerberg & Julie Moniz, Human Services

The Blue Earth County Mental Health Center provides essential services to citizens in a manner which is consistent with the Human Services' mission to deliver services in the most efficient and effective manner. Mental health services offered include therapy, case management and psychiatric medication management.

The demand for psychiatric services across the nation, and within our region, is on the rise. At the same time there is a dwindling supply of psychiatric professionals. In 2009, Blue Earth County responded to this increased demand in partnership with the South Central Community Based Initiative (SCCBI), by developing an innovative and cost-effective model of psychiatric care which has come to be known as "The Hub". Located in the Blue Earth County Government Center, The Hub is the central site for public psychiatric care throughout this ten-county region in southern Minnesota. Not only has The Hub provided desperately needed services to the other partner counties, it has also significantly increased the availability of psychiatric services to the citizens of Blue Earth County.

The Hub provides services in partnership with other essential community providers, with the philosophy

that effective mental health treatment isn't achieved solely through medication management. Unique to the Hub, patients can access their psychiatric care through the use of interactive technology, with ITV sites located at each of the partner counties. The Hub model has been successful in recruiting and retaining exceptional psychiatric providers, resulting in a high quality of patient care. ■



Mental health professionals can meet with clients by utilizing technology to maximize resources for greater efficiency and cost savings.

For more information about The Hub, call (507) 304-4319.

WIC IS MOVING!

NEW LOCATION:
Blue Earth County
Government Center
410 S. 5th Street, Mankato

WIC offices will be located in the Blue Earth County Government Center at 410 S. 5th Street in Mankato as of May 2. WIC will be located on the basement level of the Government Center. There are two entrances, one from the outside of the building on the side with the parking lot and one from the inside of the building.

WOMEN, INFANTS, AND CHILDREN (WIC)

What is WIC?

WIC is a nutritional program that helps families eat well and stay healthy. The program provides support and help with breastfeeding, one-on-one counseling about nutrition, nutrition education, vouchers to buy healthy foods and helps with referrals to other health and social services.

Who is WIC For?

- Women who are pregnant, breastfeeding or recently had a baby and who meet WIC eligibility guidelines.
- Infants from birth to one year of age.
- Children from one year of age to their fifth birthday.



SERVING YOU



Drew Campbell
District 1 Commissioner
P. O. Box 1283
Mankato, MN 56002-1283
387-2408 (H) / 304-4282 (O)
drew.campbell@co.blue-earth.mn.us



Vance Stuehrenberg
District 2 Commissioner
2316 East Main St.
Mankato, MN 56001
388-8129 (H) / 317-3942 (C)
vances@city.mankato.mn.us



Mark Piepho, Vice Chair
District 3 Commissioner
8 Skyline Drive
Mankato, MN 56001
345-4380 (H) / 304-4368 (O)
mark.piepho@co.blue-earth.mn.us



Will Purvis
District 4 Commissioner
52298 140th Lane
Vernon Center, MN 56090
549-3420 (H) / 317-5465 (C)
will.purvis@co.blue-earth.mn.us



Kip Bruender, Chair
District 5 Commissioner
204 Joan Lane
Eagle Lake, MN 56024
257-2116 (H) / 382-2440 (C)
kip.bruender@co.blue-earth.mn.us



Brad Peterson, Sheriff
Blue Earth County Justice Center
401 Carver Rd.
Mankato, MN 56001
304-4800
brad.peterson@co.blue-earth.mn.us



Ross Arneson, County Attorney
Blue Earth County Justice Center
401 Carver Rd.
Mankato, MN 56001
304-4600



Bob Meyer, County Administrator
Blue Earth County Historic Courthouse
204 S. Fifth St.
Mankato, MN 56001
304-4235
bob.meyer@co.blue-earth.mn.us

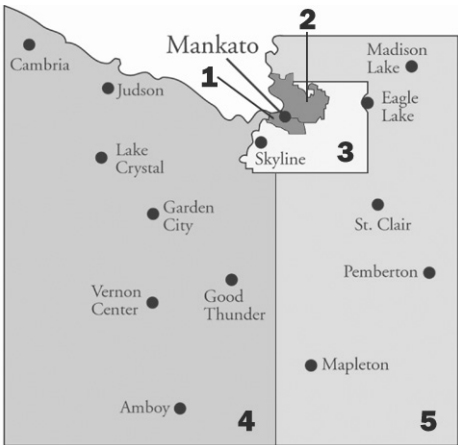
Board Information

The Blue Earth County Board generally meets every other Tuesday in the Boardroom at the Blue Earth County Historic Courthouse, 204 South Fifth Street, Mankato. For specific dates and times visit:

www.co.blue-earth.mn.us/board/schedule.php

Citizens who wish to address the Board of Commissioners at a meeting must contact the County Administrator at 304-4284 before noon Thursday preceding the Board meeting. This is needed to manage the Board's schedule. The Board will not take action at the time of the presentation, but will direct County staff to respond appropriately to issues raised by citizens.

Blue Earth County COMMISSIONER DISTRICTS



Write Now!

Write & Tell Us What You Think.

The Blue Earth County Board of Commissioners and other officials are committed to providing quality service to our residents. Responding to your concerns and needs is a priority.

Please fill out the information below and leave it with a receptionist at any County office, or mail it at your convenience to:

Blue Earth County Public Information
P.O. Box 8608
Mankato, MN 56002-8608
or e-mail info@co.blue-earth.mn.us

With which County department did you have contact?

Please Evaluate: Excellent Good Poor

Courtesy of employees	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Knowledge of employees	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Timeliness of service	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Value of service provided	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

I would like County officials to know:

I have a suggestion:

If you want us to respond to your comments:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Daytime Phone: _____

Thank you for your feedback.
We appreciate your comments so
we can serve you better!

SERVICE DIRECTORY



**Blue Earth County
Justice Center**
401 Carver Rd., Mankato



**Blue Earth County
Historic Courthouse**
204 S. Fifth St., Mankato



**County
Government Center**
410 S. Fifth St., Mankato

**Probation
1st Floor 304-4750**

Restitution/Restorative Justice
Adult & Juvenile Probation, Parole, Supervised
Release and Diversion
Pre-trial Services/Bail Evaluation
Community Work Service Programs

County Sheriff /Emergency Services

1st Floor 304-4800

Burning Permits
Civil Process Office
Request a Crime Report
Report a Crime

5th Judicial District Court

2nd Floor 304-4650

Traffic Tickets
Small Claims Court
Civil and Criminal Court

County Attorney

2nd Floor 304-4600



**Public Works
Department**
35 Map Dr., Mankato

Roads & Bridges 304-4025

Road/Bridge Construction & Inspection
Permits: Driveway, Overweight/Size Loads, Utility
Culvert Sales
Swing-away Mailbox Mounts
Calcium Chloride for Dust Control
Park & Trail System 304-4025
Camping & Shelter Reservations
Firewood Sales & Boat Rental
Agricultural Inspection 304-4025
Weed Control & Seed Testing

**Physical Plant/Safety
Lower Level 304-4249**

Finance

Lower Level 304-4182

Taxpayer Services – Property Information/Passports

1st Floor 304-4251

Property Assessment & Tax Collection
Abstracts/Certificates for Registered Land
Mapping
Ditch Management
Passports

Administration

2nd Floor 304-4284

Human Resources 304-4288
Public Information 304-4491

U of M Extension

3rd Floor 304-4325

Agriculture 304-4143
4-H/youth Development 304-4142
Horticulture 304-4146
Misc. Program Areas 304-4326
Nutrition Education Program 304-4141



**Blue Earth County
Library**
100 E. Main St., Mankato

General Services 304-4001
Children's & Young Adult Services 304-4020
Adult & Reference Services 304-4022
Fines & Renewals 304-4010
Meeting Room Reservations 304-4002
Bookmobile 345-5120
Administration 304-4002
Mapleton Public Library 524-3513
Lake Crystal Public Library 726-2726

**Taxpayer Services – License Center/Elections
Lower Level 304-4340**

Driver's Licenses
Motor Vehicle/Boat Registration
Fishing/Hunting Licenses
Birth/Death Certificates
Marriage Licenses
Voter Registration/Absentee Ballots
Filing of Notaries

Veterans Services

Lower Level 304-4246

Federal & State Benefits
Transportation to VA Hospital

Information Technology

Lower Level 304-4204

Human Services

1st/2nd/3rd Floors

Main Line 304-4222
Financial Assistance 304-4335
Social Services 304-4319
Community Health 304-4319
Mental Health Center 304-4319
Child Protection/Intake 304-4444
Child Support 304-4166

Environmental Services

3rd Floor 304-4381

Planning & Zoning
Building & Feedlot Permits
Shorelands/Flood Plains
Water Wells/Septic Systems/Wetlands
Recycling Center/Compost Site/Landfill
Household Hazardous Waste Center
911/Rural Addressing

Serving Citizens Through County Government

Other County Facilities/Numbers

Household Hazardous Waste Facility
651 Summit Ave., Mankato, 304-4242

Ponderosa Landfill
20028 Gooseberry Lane, Mankato, 625-7301

Recycling Center
741 Waseca Ave., LeHillier, 345-4255

24-Hour Waste and Recycling Hotline, 304-4242

County TTY/TDD (Hearing Impaired), 304-4399



**BLUE EARTH
COUNTY**

visit us online:
www.co.blue-earth.mn.us